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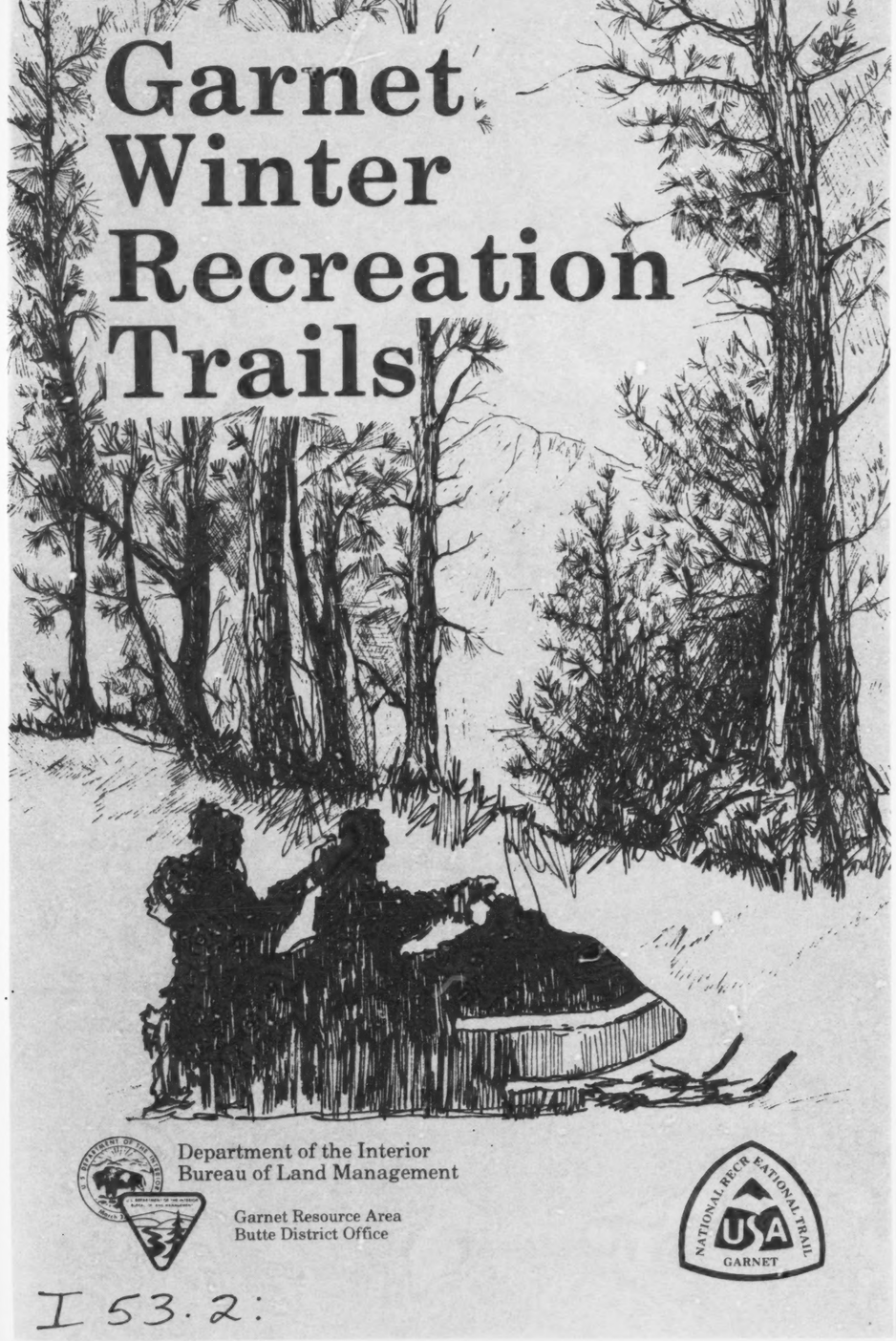
Garnet Winter Recreation Trails



Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Garnet Resource Area
Butte District Office

NATIONAL RECREATIONAL TRAIL
USA
GARNET

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GARNET WINTER RECREATION TRAILS

GARNET NATIONAL WINTER RECREATION TRAILS

The Garnet National Winter Recreation Trail system is the hub for winter recreation in the Garnet Range east of Missoula. Cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, scenic overlooks, cabin rentals and visits to Garnet Ghost Town lure fun seekers from all over the nation. The main trail from Greenough to Garnet (Trail A) is groomed on a regular basis for both snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Some areas in and around the ghost town are groomed on a fairly regular basis. The lower-elevation portions of trails B and C are groomed infrequently. Expect most other Garnet recreation trails to be ungroomed.

A Range Road Trail. This main trail is 13.1 miles long with an elevation gain of 1,800 feet. The trail rises from an elevation of 4,200 feet at the Greenough parking lot to 6,000 feet near Garnet, then drops to 5,000 feet at Elk Creek junction. Grades are gentle to moderate (under 10 percent) so the trail can accommodate beginning and intermediate snowmobilers, plus intermediate and advanced skiers. Scenic vistas are located all along this popular trail segment. Garnet is 11 miles from the parking lot. Be cautious as the trail is used by both snowmobilers and skiers. There are open mine shafts and tunnels around Coloma and Garnet, so stay on marked trails to avoid these hazards. The lower portion of the Range Road Trail may be plowed in the winter to facilitate logging or mining. For those wishing to begin near Route 200 when the Garnet Range Road is plowed an alternate trail parallels the main road. An emergency shelter is located east of Sand Park.

B Keno Creek/Pearl Ridge Loop. Branching off the Range Road Trail at Elk Creek junction, this loop winds for 11.3 miles through varied terrain. The trail rises from 5,000 feet elevation at its junction with the Range Road Trail to about 7,000 feet along the Pearl Ridge/Elevation Mountain segment. Numerous scenic vistas are found along Pearl Ridge with outstanding views in all directions for anyone venturing to the top of Elevation Mountain. Along Pearl Ridge you may encounter high winds and severe drift areas. Watch for hazardous mine trenches around the Mountain Mine. Stay on marked trails and avoid traveling alone. Steep grades are encountered on upper portions of the Keno Creek segment. This trail, particularly at higher elevations, is recommended only for advanced skiers and experienced snowmobilers. Two rental cabins located on the upper portion of the Keno Creek segment and south of Elevation Mountain are available for overnight accommodations. The Pearl Ridge/Elevation Mountain segment is not groomed and patrols are infrequent.

C Kennedy Creek Trail. This 7.1-mile loop branches off the Keno Creek Trail. It passes through remote country with areas of high winds and severe drifting. The higher portions offer scenic overlooks. The Kennedy Creek Trail is quite steep. It should be used only by advanced skiers and experienced snowmobilers. An Adirondack-style, three-sided, open front emergency shelter is located on the east slope of Elevation Mountain, one-half mile north of the junction with Loop B. Patrols are infrequent and grooming is limited to lower elevations. Skiers and snowmobilers should not travel alone.

SECONDARY TRAILS

About 25 miles of secondary trails follow existing roads radiating out from the national recreation trail. Secondary trails are signed with snowmobile trail signs and symbols. Grooming and patrolling, however, are infrequent except for Trails D and H which provide access into Garnet.

D First Chance Gulch. This 3-mile trail starts at the site of an old gold camp called Beartown and climbs 1,200 feet up the "China Grade" into Garnet. There are sustained grades with some reaching 10 to 20 percent. Skiers may wish to use "skins" or walk. The trail is often hard packed. This trail provides the most direct route to Garnet from the south. Because of steep grades and sharp turns, it is not recommended for inexperienced skiers. Although somewhat longer, the Cave Gulch Trail offers gentler grades which may be more suitable for beginning and intermediate skiers.

E Summit Cabin Trail. This 4.2-mile trail provides an alternate route for reaching the national recreation trail (Loop B) at Elk Creek summit. The Cave Gulch Trail H also intersects this trail 2.0 miles east of Garnet, providing an easy access route into the ghost town. A number of historic mines and cabins can be seen along this trail when they're not obscured by heavy snow. The trail has gentle to moderate slopes. They're suitable for the less experienced skiers and snowmobilers although heavy drifting occurs on open slopes and ridge tops.

F Top O'Deep Trail. A side loop of the Keno Creek/Pearl Ridge loop, this 3.4-mile trail provides access to the Top O'Deep mining area. This is remote country for winter recreation users and should not be attempted alone. Inexperienced skiers and snowmobilers should avoid this area because of the distance from trailheads, unpredictable weather and adverse trail conditions. Grades are gentle to moderate with some steep pitches. Sections of heavy drifting and mine shafts along the trails present hazards for users who leave the signed route.

G Union Peak/Ten-Mile Creek Trail. This trail is 10.7 miles long and can be entered at the Union Peak turnoff on the Range Road Trail or at Ten-Mile Creek along the Bear Gulch Road. Outstanding views of surrounding mountain ranges and wilderness areas are available from Union Peak and other overlooks. Overnight accommodations are available at the Union Peak lookout on a first-come, first-served basis. The route has heavy drifting on open slopes north of Union Peak. Grades are gentle to moderate with some steep pitches. Not recommended for inexperienced skiers and snowmobilers.

H Cave Gulch Trail. The trail provides an alternate access route into Garnet from the south. This 2.4-mile trail intersects with the Summit Cabin Trail 2.0 miles east of Garnet. It has moderate grades that can be negotiated by beginning or intermediate skiers with packs. Some drifting occurs on open slopes.

LUBRECHT FOREST SKI TRAILS

Access to the Lubrecht Forest ski trails is at the camp headquarters. Plowed parking lots and pit toilets are provided and trail use is limited to cross-country skiing. All trail loops are groomed weekly except for Trail E which is not maintained. Some heavily used sections may be double-tracked.

A A generally flat trail wandering through wooded terrain with trail grades less than two percent. (One mile; beginning)

B An extension of Trail A with similar terrain and slope. (1.1 miles; beginning)

C This trail goes through timber and meadows with a few trail grades of seven percent. The total elevation difference is 80 feet. A trail shelter is available in Jones Meadow. (3.1 Miles; beginning)

D A mostly forest trail with a few short trail grades of 12 percent. The total elevational difference is 180 feet. The northern portion of this trail crosses private land. Please stay on the trail in this area. (6.4 miles; intermediate)

E A rugged trail through timbered terrain. Steep sections require advanced braking and turning techniques. There are long stretches of 5 to 10 percent grades with occasional portions approaching 15 percent. (8.3 miles; advanced)

- Snow-drift area
- Mining-related hazards such as open shafts, trenches, tunnels and uneven terrain
- Emergency Shelter
- Phone
- Radio — phone
- Visitor center
- Town
- Ghost Town
- Mileage marker
- Cabin
- Cemetery
- P Parking area
- Interstate highway
- Primary or secondary road
- Light duty or unimproved road
- Trail access route

SOME SIGNS TO KNOW

Garnet National Winter Recreation Trails

Snowmobiling and skiing permitted

Cross-country skiing only

For Reassurance That You Are On The Trail

Multipurpose Trail (Skiing and Snowmobiling)

Cross-country skiing only

Arrow designates route

Ski Trails — Degree of Difficulty (Lubrecht Forest Ski Trails)

For Warmup and Beginning Skiers

Mainly level to gently rolling terrain. No sharp curves or steep slopes. Under most conditions, hills can be skied without need to "snowplow" or "herringbone."

For Advanced Beginners and Experienced Skiers

More rolling and hilly. Longer and steeper slopes than "easiest" trails. May be necessary to "herringbone" on short steep slopes.

For Vigorous, Experienced Skiers Who Seek a Challenge

Quite hilly. Usually part of longer loops. Longer and steeper slopes than "more difficult" trails. Often necessary to "herringbone" and/or sidestep. Snowplowing and/or step turns may be necessary for control on some downhill portions of "more difficult" and "most difficult" trails.

Caution — Signs are sometimes stolen or damaged. Some trails may be partially or completely unsigned.

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GARNET WINTER RECREATION TRAILS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has developed over 55 miles of trails for snowmobilers and cross-country skiers in the Garnet Range east of Missoula. The trails wind through timber and open slopes, skirt heavily mined areas and climb to elevations of 7,000 feet. At several points the trails open up to spectacular views of the Blackfoot Valley, the Mission Mountains, the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the Pintlar Range.

The core of the trail network is the 31.5-mile Garnet National Winter Recreation Trail system. National Recreation Trails are designated by the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to identify outstanding recreation opportunities throughout the country.

The Garnet trails cross federal, state, corporate and private lands. They are cooperatively managed by the Garnet Preservation Association, the Bureau of Land Management, Lubrecht Experimental Forest and the State Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

The trails are marked with several different kinds of signs. **Examples of the various signs are shown on the map side.** All trails shown on the map side, with the exception of the Lubrecht trails (shown in blue), are open to both snowmobiling and skiing. When groomed, they are groomed for both snowmobiling and skiing. These groomed trails are marked with standard international snowmobile trail signs.

A few special areas in the immediate vicinity of Garnet Ghost Town have been set aside for exclusive use by cross-country skiers. These short trails, not shown on the map, are marked with standard cross-country ski trail signs.

The Garnet Ghost Town Visitor Center is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the winter. Hot drinks may be available.

Please stay on the trails and enjoy your winter outing!

ACCESS

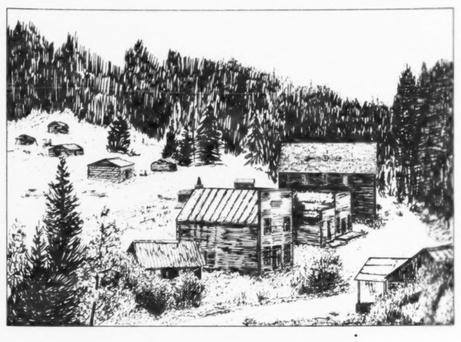
From Montana Route 200. Turn south between mile markers 22 and 23, about 30 miles east of Missoula. Plowed parking lots are provided at the trailhead along the Garnet Range Road. The locations of parking areas vary from year to year depending upon logging and mining activity. The parking lots are well marked.

From Interstate 90. Take either the Drummond or Bearmouth exit. Then follow old U.S. 10 to the Bear Gulch Road about midway between the two exits. Drivers should have dependable winter vehicles and chains are recommended. Visitors may park in the small cleared area near the end of the plowed road. Do not block any private access. Space is limited.

GARNET GHOST TOWN

From 1895 to 1911 the gold mining town of Garnet bustled and prospered. It boasted a dozen saloons, numerous hotels, brothels, stores, blacksmith shops and residences for more than a thousand people.

Like most mining towns Garnet faded as gold became more difficult to extract and jobs opened elsewhere. A fire destroyed most of the commercial district in 1911, and despite a revival during the depression, Garnet fell into final decline and became a year-round home for ghosts by 1950.



Garnet Ghost Town in 1980

The Garnet Preservation Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of Garnet Ghost Town, cooperatively manages Garnet with the Bureau of Land Management. Its activities include helping to fund the caretaker position, stabilizing old buildings and staffing the visitor center.

Although weather and vandalism have destroyed much of the town, recent efforts have succeeded in stabilizing some of the historically significant structures. As a winter visitor, you can help the preservation effort by staying out of the buildings and reporting vandalism to the caretaker or the BLM. No fires are permitted in or around buildings.

In cooperation with the BLM, the Garnet Preservation Association offers nightly cabin rentals from December through April. Several cabins are located in Garnet Ghost Town. For those interested in overnight tours, there are cabins available throughout the Garnet Range. Money from this program goes directly toward preservation of Garnet.

Tour maps of Garnet Ghost Town are available at the visitor center.

IF YOU GET LOST

If you become lost, try to backtrack to a familiar place. If this fails STOP well before DARK.

- **S** **Stop.** Sit down. Look at your surroundings. Let the fear of being lost pass.
- **T** **Think.** Analyze your situation: weather, terrain, physical condition and immediate needs.
- **O** **Organize.** Look at your own personal resources: energy, supplies, ability to control panic, positive attitude about your situation. Look at your equipment: clothing, food and water, fire starting equipment, maps, tools, etc. Look at everything you have and organize it.
- **P** **Plan.** Lay out a course of action which is in line with your resources and situation.

Periodically STOP and think about your situation: whether you should travel on or prepare a shelter and fire. Mark your location so it will be visible from the air. Make three large X's in the snow or be prepared to start three smoky fires. To attract attention use three whistle blasts or three shouts. The universal distress signal is three of anything that will attract attention.

Emergency shelters are shown on the map: (1) Garnet Ghost Town, (2) one-half mile east of Sand Park Cemetery on the Garnet Range Road (Trail A), (3) on the east side of Elevation Mountain, and (4) on Union Peak.

INFORMATION

Maps, Snow Conditions, General Information

Garnet Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
3255 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, Montana 59801
(406) 329-3914

Cabin Rentals, General Information

Garnet Preservation Association
P.O. Box 8531
Missoula, Montana 59807
(406) 549-8476 or (406) 329-3914

Topographic Maps

USGS National Cartographic Information Center, Montana Affiliate
Room 200 Main Hall
Montana Tech
Butte, Montana 59701
(406) 496-4167

COURTESY

It takes only one inconsiderate visitor to ruin an outing for others. Don't park your vehicle where it will block access for others.

Litter detracts from everyone's winter experience. If you pack it in, then pack it out. Bury human waste away from trails and at least 200 feet from streams.

Cross-country Skiers

When you hear snowmobiles coming, move to the side of the trail to allow the machine to pass safely. On corners move to the side of the trail which allows you to be seen from the greatest distance.

Dogs can be a nuisance to others and can ruin a groomed ski trail. If you must bring a dog, please ski in areas not groomed and keep the dog under control.

Snowmobilers

When you encounter skiers on trails slow down and move to the side to pass safely.

A very small percentage of Garnet's trails are designated and signed for skiers only. Please respect these restrictions.

Logged areas make ideal "play areas." However, small trees are extremely susceptible to injury unless adequately covered and cushioned by snow. Avoid running over trees regardless of size.

WINTERING WILDLIFE

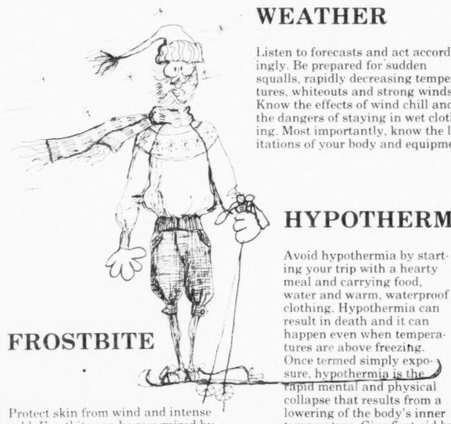
Deer, elk, moose and many species of nongame animals are found along the trails and in the vicinity of Garnet. Deep snow, cold temperatures and limited food supplies tax the animals' energy reserves necessary for winter survival. Contact with recreationists stresses them even further.

When you see wild animals along the trail respect their weakened condition. Don't stop and alarm them; just keep moving on.

SAFETY WARNINGS!!!

WEATHER

Listen to forecasts and act accordingly. Be prepared for sudden squalls, rapidly decreasing temperatures, whiteouts and strong winds. Know the effects of wind chill and the dangers of staying in wet clothing. Most importantly, know the limitations of your body and equipment.



HYPOTHERMIA

Avoid hypothermia by starting your trip with a hearty meal and carrying food, water and warm, waterproof clothing. Hypothermia can result in death and it can happen even when temperatures are above freezing. Once termed simply exposure, hypothermia is the rapid mental and physical collapse that results from a lowering of the body's inner temperature. Give first aid by restoring body temperature as rapidly as possible. Avoid alcohol. Seek medical aid.

FROSTBITE

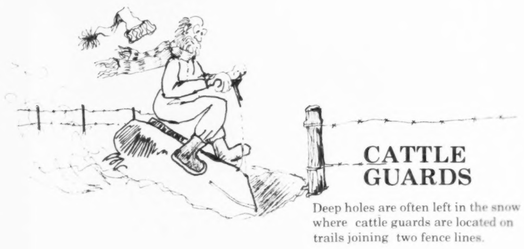
Protect skin from wind and intense cold. Frostbite can be recognized by loss of feeling and a glossy white appearance of the skin. Seek medical treatment.

GROUPS

Travel with at least two other companions whenever possible. In emergencies one person can go for help while others render assistance at the scene.

TRAVEL PLANS

Be traceable. Leave specific information about your plans with a reliable person. Know where you are going and stick to the route. Check in when you return.



CATTLE GUARDS

Deep holes are often left in the snow where cattle guards are located on trails joining two fence lines.

MINE SHAFTS

Snow may partially or totally obscure these extremely dangerous openings. Please, stay on marked trails; there are no organized patrols. You are on your own!

BARBED WIRE

Drifted snow can hide barbed wire fences. Under certain light conditions and at high rates of speed, barbed wire may be very hard to see even if it is above the snow.

BE CAREFUL

As a visitor on public land, you assume certain risks and liabilities, and a responsibility to be aware of hazards. You should take prudent steps to protect yourself and others. The BLM informs you of hazards and monitors some areas for hazards, but BLM does not assume liability for damage to users due to normal, natural hazards or careless or irresponsible use of an area.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In case of emergencies or overdue parties, contact:

Granite County Sheriff
(406) 859-3251

Missoula County Sheriff
(406) 721-5700

Powell County Sheriff
(406) 846-2711

Bureau of Land Management
Missoula (406) 329-3914

Garnet Ghost Town
The caretaker at Garnet may be contacted by radio via the Missoula Answering Service
(406) 728-4710

If you return safely after being overdue and you suspect a search may be in progress, contact the person who has knowledge of your tour, sheriff's offices and Missoula BLM.

Phone locations are shown on the map: Garnet Ghost Town (radio-to-phone), Lubrecht Forest headquarters and commercial site just east of the Bearmouth exit.

* GPO 1989-694-040

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